

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## COLONIAL DIARIES

Carefully read over the diaries of the farmer from Connecticut and the planter from Virginia. As you read, answer the questions below. In the readings, highlight or underline any

	Thomas Minor (CT)	William Byrd (VA)
What individuals do they mention interacting with? Who is mentioned in their diaries? What is their relationship to each individual?		
What kind of work do they do?		
What tasks or activities (other than work) does each man record in his diary?		

## Thomas Minor's Diary: A Farmer's Year, 1660

The first month is March 31 days & is the first year after the leap year being the year 1660 & Thursday the first & Thursday the 8. John Russell ran away the same time our frame was raised Wednesday the 14. We ended the court Thursday the 15. I was threshing of wheat for Ralph Perker. We had our 3

pigs from Father's & Thursday the 22 I paid the last wheat. Our goats began to kid. Thomas Huet vessel was tached [?] & Tuesday the 27 John [Thomas Minor's son] carried all aboard Thursday the 29. Saturday 31 we had built our back & oven.

The second month is April 30 days & Sabbath day the first and Sabbath day the 8. We had begun the last week Monday the 9. Clement [Thomas Minor's son] went to New London to work Sabbath day the 15. Monday the 16 we made an end of sowing the wheat and peas and Tuesday the 17 we were to set forth for the day & Sabbath day the 22. The 20th of April we received a letter of John's safe arrival. Monday 23 we began to plant & Wednesday 25 I made an end of all our plowing & Sabbath day 29. Monday the 30 we had made an end of planting of our Indian corn.

The third month is May 31 days & Tuesday the first. The seventh day I was at the Town the London ship was at New London Tuesday the 8. I made the hedge at the stand & Wednesday the 9. I made an end of that work the 10th & 11th. I shingled the north side of the house & Tuesday the 15 & Tuesday the 22 we had kept a day of humiliation. The day before the 24 being Thursday we were to set forth for the Bay. We came to Boston the 30th and Thursday the 31 Ms Dyer [Quaker Mary Dyer] was Executed.

The fourth month is June 30 days & Friday the first. I was at Boston Friday the 8th. I was at Boston & Friday was 15. I lay at the trading house. I set my hand to the agreement between Major Allerton & the other English & the 3 Narraganset sachems about the land. Isaac Willy was married that day sometime before & that day promised Amos Richerson 3 cattle, one black Cow, one bull with a white face 3 years old, one red steer of 2 years old. The 21 day the court. A day of humiliation Friday the 22 & Friday 29 I paid Peperions ten shillings for killing of two wolves & Saturday the 30.

The fifth month is July 31 days & Sabbath day the first. This week I agreed with Rogers about John's 2 Cows & a calf & Sabbath day the 8. The 7th of this month I sowed turnips. The 13 there was a town meeting & Sabbath day the 15. I pulled hemp. Ephraim & Joseph [Thomas Minor's sons] mowed in the orchard Friday & Saturday 20 and 21. We had a court at Captain Denison's Sabbath day 22. 23 I looked horses fetched one load of hay & Saturday the 28 I cut peas & Sabbath day 29 & Tuesday the 31.

The sixth month is August 31 days and Wednesday the first. I cut fence & carried them Wednesday the 8. I carried my wheat Thursday the 9. I carried the Ram to the Island & Wednesday the 15. Friday 17 Thomas & Ephraim [Thomas Minor's sons] was at Samuel Cheesbrough's. The 13 day I had the gelding at Captain Denison's. The 20th day John Tower came here & Wednesday the 22 we Carried 5 loads of hay & made a rick next to the barn. Wednesday 29 I was at town & took up things for John. I was at Prentice to show the horse Friday 31.

The seventh month is September 30 days & Saturday the first. Mr. Winthrop [John Winthrop, Jr., son of the Massachusetts Bay leader and a governor of Connecticut] was at New London. The 4th day the horses were at Culver's. John Moore began to work for me Saturday the 8. The 12 I reckoned with

Mr. Picket and made all even being Wednesday & Saturday the 15 Clement & John Moore went to New London. I & Joseph was at Borden's & the 2 horses were gone. The 12th day also I paid Toung his silver before Josias Willkins and quite freed the horse & Saturday the 22 I clove Clapboards. Sabbath day 23 we first did see Carrie's cow to spring udder. John was here. The last of September we came home from Narraganset & Master Bridgen first taught here.

The eight month is October 31 days & Monday the first. This day Hannah her child [possibly Grace Minor's sister Hannah] died before day & Monday the 8 the moon was Eclipsed. I was to go with Mr. Bridgen toward Mohegan & Monday the 29 I carried the firkin of butter to Mr. Smith for Amos. I marked the Colt a bay mare without any white. The mare have a white face, a slit in the right ear, 3 white feet part of the 42, a white ring about each ear, a halfpenny on each ear Wednesday the 31.

The ninth [month] is November 30 days & Thursday the first. Friday the 2 I weighed Amos his firkin of butter at Mr. Smith's. It was 70 pounds & there is 13 pounds to pay. The 8 day being Thursday we had Carried 45 loads of muck out of the yards. There was a meeting to be at Smith's of the whole Town & Thursday the 15. This week we killed the steer. I was at New London & had the axes & guns mended. The steer came to six pounds. The 20 we began the little house. Thursday 22 it snowed the second time. Thursday the 29 we appointed a meeting to be at Cheesbrough's. That day fortnight I began to clean clapboards. Friday the 30 we had home all the timber for the little house.

The tenth month is December 31 days & Saturday is the first & Saturday the 8. I came from Connecticut the 13 day. The Towns men met at Cheesbrough's & Saturday the 15. The 11th of this month we raised the little house. Tuesday the 18 there is a court at Captain Denison's & Saturday the 22 we got stones for the Chimney. Monday 24 the Town men met at Mr. Stanton's. Tuesday the 25 called Christmas Day [Puritans did not celebrate Christmas, which they considered a pagan survival] & Saturday the 29. Monday the 31. Sabbath day the 30 I received a letter from Cambridge. Christmas day I received a letter from my Cousin in England.

The eleventh month is January 31 days and Tuesday the first. Thursday the 3 we killed the sow. Tuesday the 8 I made an end of Threshing of the wheat in the north end of the barn. The same day it snowed. I had 20 Bushels of wheat. Marie was sick & Tuesday the 15 Marie continued very sick & I fetched honey at starts & Tuesday the 22. Thursday 24 Marie died about six o'clock. [Minor and his wife, Grace Palmer Minor, lost two daughters in infancy.] We had 40 bushels of wheat. We fetched in the peas & Tuesday the 29 I Reckoned with my Father Palmer. There was all paid & 17 shillings due to me. Thursday the 31 we had 10 bushels of white peas.

The twelfth month is February and hath 28 days. Friday the first and is the first year after the leap year & is the year 1660 [1661 had begun January 1 by the modern calendar]. This week Clement & Thomas went to Stratford. The white heifer Calved. We finished the fence to the Rocks by the swamp

Friday the 8. There fell a great snow & Friday the 15 I made an end of Coming of hemp & Friday the 22 it hailed.

Planter William Byrd's Diary  
of a Planter's Month, 1740

1. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather was cool and cloudy, the wind north. I wrote English and walked. My cold continued. I put things in order till dinner when I ate rice milk. After dinner came Doctor Mollet but had no news but a good stomach. After dinner we walked and played cards at night till 9. I prayed.

2. I rose about 6, read Hebrew but no Greek but wrote letters [to go] by the boat. I danced. The weather was cold and clear, the wind west. About 10 the Doctor went off and I wrote English and walked till dinner and ate roast beef. After dinner walked again. At night read English. Mrs. Byrd had the headache. I talked with my people, read English and prayed. My cold continued.

3. Rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had [pulse?]. I danced. The weather continued cold and clear, the wind west. I wrote several things, walked and read English till dinner when I ate roast turkey. After dinner we walked again. In the evening the people came with the wagon from Meherrin. I walked at night, talked with my people, read English and prayed. My cold continued. God save me.

4. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather was cold and clear, the wind north. About 12 came John

Stith and his wife, Mr. Pinkard and his wife, and Betty Stith, and dined. Captain Branch called but stayed not to dinner. I ate salt fish. After dinner it threatened rain so Mr. Pinkard and his wife stayed; the rest went. I prayed.

5. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather was warm and cloudy, the wind north. I received letters from England from our friends, who were well, thank God. I walked and wrote English till dinner. Mrs. Stith's daughter and Mrs. Pinkard dined with us and I ate roast mutton. After dinner the company went away. I talked with my people and prayed.

6. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had tea. I danced. The weather was cold and wet, the wind northeast. It rained great part of the day. I wrote English till dinner when I ate rice milk. After dinner we talked because we could not walk. Nobody came from the Falls. At night I talked with my people, read English and prayed. My cold continued.

7. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather was cold and clear, the wind northwest. I went not to church because it was cold. After church came no company but only Billy Hardyman. I ate roast beef. After dinner we talked and walked a little. Dr. Mollet came in the evening and stayed. I talked with my people and prayed.

8. I rose about 5 and prayed. I drank two dishes chocolate. The weather was cold and clear, the wind north. I recommended my family to the Almighty and about 8 went in the chariot as far as the lower church and then proceeded on horseback to Williamsburg, where we got about 3. I dined with the Commissary and ate roast mutton. After dinner we talked [of] all the news till 8, retired and prayed.

11. I rose about 6, read only Greek. I appointed an overseer for Mount Folly. I prayed and had coffee. The weather was warm, the wind southwest. I went about 12 to Colonel Grymes's, who was gone; then to the coffeehouse, and then dined with Mr. Needler and ate hog's head. After dinner Dr. Mollet and I walked and in the evening I went to Lady Randolph's, played cards till 9, then went home and retired.

12. I rose about 6, prayed and had rice milk. The weather was cold and cloudy, the wind northeast. I rode to the new church and met my chariot and got home about 3 and found my family well, thank God. I ate salt fish. After

dinner I put things in order and walked. At night talked with my people and gave them cider, and prayed.

13. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had tea. I danced. The weather was cold and clear, the wind northwest. I wrote several things and walked till dinner, when I ate tripe. After dinner put things in order and walked. All well at the Falls, thank God. I talked with my people, sat an hour with my children, retired, read English, and prayed.

14. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather began to be very cold, the wind north, so I went not to church but cleaned myself. Molly Stith came home to dine with us and I ate roast duck. After dinner drank tea, then walked a little in the garden. Molly Stith went home. At night talked with my people, read English, and prayed.

15. I rose about 6, read only Greek because I talked with Mr. Wood who came last night. I prayed and had tea. I danced. It was extremely cold, the wind northwest. We cut wood in the swamp. I persuaded Mr. Wood to go to Roanoke. I ate giblets for dinner. I had a letter from Daniel Custis that he was sick, and I answered it. At night I talked with Mr. Wood, spoke with my people and prayed.

25. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. The weather was very cold and cloudy, the wind north and threatened more snow. Nobody went to church except my son because of the cold. I put myself in order. After church came two playfellows for my son, young Stith and Hardyman. I ate roast turkey. After dinner we talked and I danced. I talked with my people and prayed.

26. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had hominy. It snowed all last night and rained all day. God [preserve] us from a freeze. I gave G-r-n, Harry, and A-r-g-l a vomit for going off the plantation and staying all night, which did more good than whipping. I ate roast turkey. After dinner it held up and I talked with my people and prayed. I fell down [m-n-s].

27. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had tea. I danced. The weather was warmer, the wind southwest in the morning but came at noon again to northwest. I settled some accounts and read English till dinner when I ate roast goose. After dinner my son's visitors went home, notwithstanding the snow. I danced for want of walking. I talked with my people and ordered everything to be well fed.

28. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had coffee. I danced. It snowed again this morning a little, the wind north. I put myself in good repair and walked in the gallery. Tom fell and hurt his back for which he was bled and had a [s-r-q-r]. I ate broiled turkey for dinner and

then walked in the gallery. I talked with my people and prayed. Old B-s-n [or B-v-n] died; God save his soul.

29. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had tea. I danced. The weather was cold and cloudy, the wind southwest but thawed little. I read English and walked in the gallery till dinner when I ate salt fish and eggs. After dinner I danced because I could not walk. It was warmer and threatened rain but none came. I talked with my people and prayed. I slept not well.

30. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had tea. I danced. The weather was much warmer and cloudy, the wind west and threatened rain, but it came not, though it thawed all day. I read English till dinner when I ate roast turkey. After dinner I put things in order and danced because I could not walk. At night talked with my people, read English, and prayed.

31. I rose about 6, read Hebrew and Greek. I prayed and had tea. I danced. It continued to thaw, the wind northeast. I read English till dinner when I ate pork and peas. After dinner read English and danced because could not walk. I talked with my people and prayed. It snowed.